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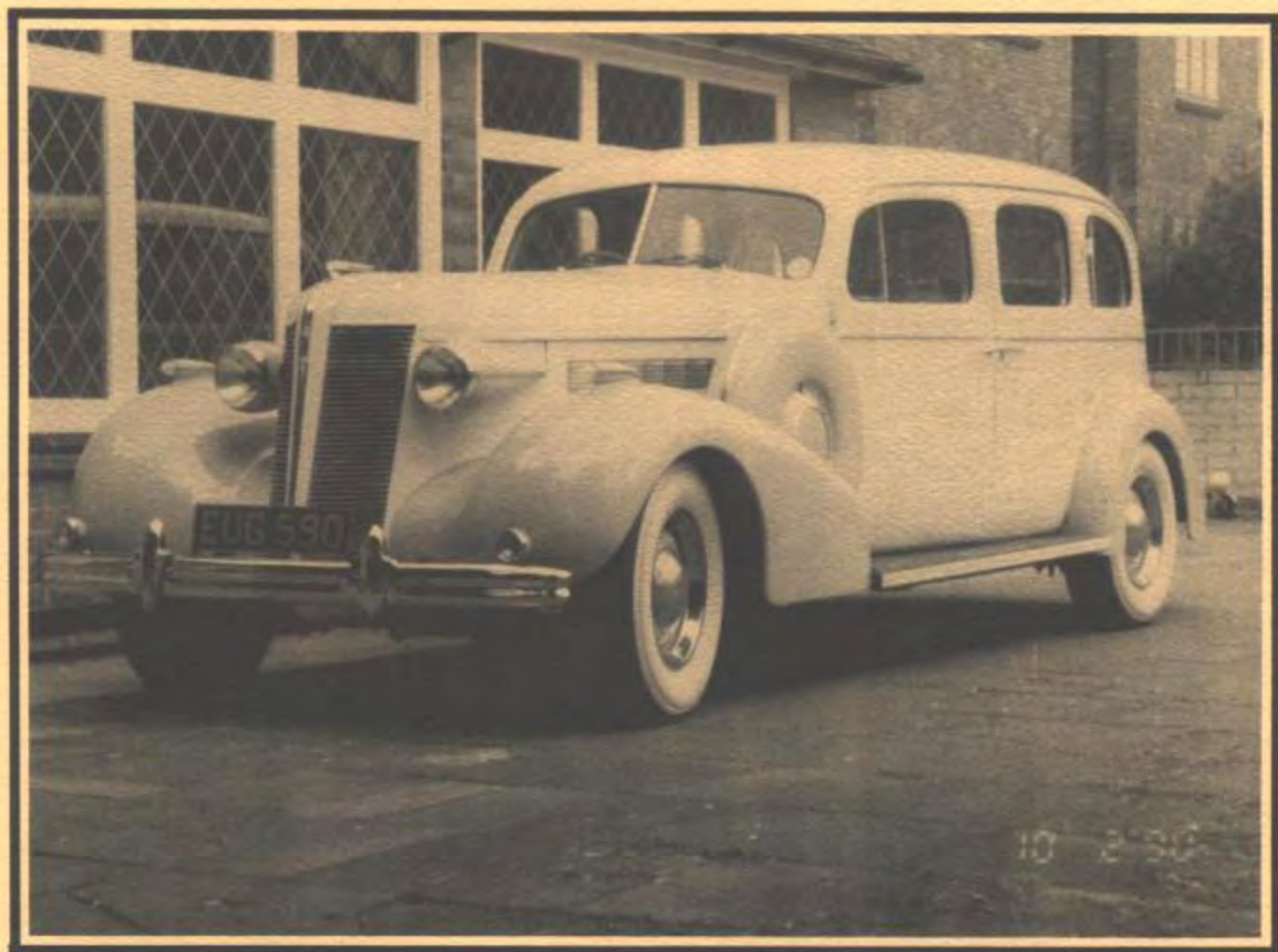
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# THE TORQUE-TUBE

THE NEWS PUBLICATION FOR MEMBERS

OF THE 1937-1938 BUICK CLUB • FOUNDED 1980



**Volume IX • Number 5**





# THE TORQUE·TUBE

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OF THE 1937-1938 BUICK CLUB • FOUNDED 1980



Volume IX, Number 5

March 1991

William E. Olson, Editor • 842 Mission Hills Lane, Columbus, Ohio 43235

## Club Meets Planned

As I write this, snow is visible outside my window, both on the ground and in the air. My work car (the infamous Plymouth Reliant) is foul with salt and grime, residues of the last snow, and it is just as well the automatic car wash was closed today; such cleanliness as might have been achieved would not have lasted long. I am trying hard to think about summer. It is no wonder primitive peoples concocted elaborate rituals to ensure that summer would come again, and devised great solar observatories from stone and piles of earth to keep track of seasons. These gave them prospects of better and balmier times to come. My prospects must be on the printed page, as well as in my knowledge that the earth's course around the sun is inexorable, and not controlled by evil spirits or fierce gods that require placating. Here printed are two excellent prospects.

1. Eastern Club Meet. No volunteers have come forth with plans for anything. I will therefore put something together myself, and, because I am not able this year to spend a lot of time tooling around Ohio looking at or for interesting locations, as I did two years ago, it will be held in the vicinity of Columbus. The "headquarters motel" will be one of several around the north end of the Columbus "outerbelt" (i.e. I-270) and thus easily accessible from major highways. There will be no car judging. Everyone who brings a '37 or '38 Buick will receive one or more photographs of his car against an attractive background as a memento, and all participants will receive a souvenir of one sort or another. Activities will probably include visits to: Inniswood Gardens, one of our more pleasant and attractive county parks; the famous Len Immke car collection (if I can arrange that); and maybe something more. I won't be able to duplicate the interesting, novel and beautiful surroundings that we had in the '89 Meet, but I'm sure it will be fun, and the important thing is to get together, whatever the surroundings. I'm afraid I may be tied up toward the end of August, September weather is chancy, and the BCA National this year is in late July. Therefore, I am scheduling our Eastern Club Meet for June 27, 28 and 29. Please mark your calendars now. More information in the next issue; in the meantime, if you need details before then, write or give me a call.

2. Western Club Meet: "Pacific Coast Classic." This has been scheduled immediately after the BCA National. The organizers — Cecil Don (#637) and Carl and Judy Dahl (#868) — and I decided that this would draw many people who can make one trip to California but not two. The only drawback is the possibility of too much in one six-day period, but the organizers have planned different activities in different locations



**FOUNDED BY DAVE LEWIS**





## COVER CARS



**FRONT COVER:** You will find out a good deal more about this 1937 McLaughlin-Buick 90-series six-passenger sedan (or, as the Brit call 'em, saloon) in the following pages.

**BACK COVER:** Another Brewster-bodied town car. The side view of this '38 90-series gives a good idea of what they looked like. According to the owner of the photograph, Karl S. Zahm of Rockford, Illinois, the car is pictured in New York City circa 1947. (The building hints at 1930s Art Deco architecture, but I cannot identify the location.) This is typical Brewster style -- an odd combination of "traditional" and "modern" -- and interesting historically although not to everyone's taste. Our thanks to Mr. Zahm for generously loaning the photograph. (Thanks also to Jim Pearsall (#827) who told me about it.)

from the BCA event. Our Meet will be more of a tour-type event. Participants will leave the Red Lion in Sacramento on Sunday morning July 20 and drive approximately 75 miles through Davis, west around a lake (the name of which I've forgotten) to Napa, and the home of Charles Van Koten (#388), who will host a picnic. We will then proceed to Yountville and a Best Western motel, at which there will be a hospitality room. Monday there will be a winery visit, after which we will go on to Bodega Bay and Goat Rock on the coast; a banquet will be held on Monday evening. Tuesday, reluctantly I hope, everyone will go home. (For those returning to the Sacramento Airport, the distance will be about 100 miles.)

A registration form for the West Coast event is included in this issue (probably the last page). If you don't want to cut it out (some people seem to feel that cutting anything out of a Torque Tube issue is like burning the flag, or worse), make a photocopy, or put the necessary information on a piece of paper. If you have any questions about this event, call the people listed on the form.

3. General Information. You do not need to bring a '37 or '38 Buick to these meets to have a good time. Unless your disposition is incorrigibly misanthropic, you will enjoy yourself, and probably learn something. At the Ohio meet (and in California if time permits), John Huffman (#623) or another experienced AACA judge and I will conduct a car-judging-and-show-preparation "seminar", in which we will take one or two cars and "talk through" how we would score them in big-time competition. (Look back at Issue 4, page 5 and see how Huffman described himself.) This will be done in a good-natured manner, without busting anybody's ego. Many people who have not judged show cars seem somewhat bewildered about how it is done, and what one can get nailed for. This kind of education will, I hope, help members improve their cars for future shows.

*Let's have a big turnout!*

### THE POST OFFICE LAYS AN EGG

Perhaps the most well-known newspaper headline of all time appeared in the New York show-business journal Variety the day after the great stock market crash of 1929: "Wall Street Lays an Egg!" Well, if "laying an egg" is a euphemism for putting on a terrible performance, the turkeys at the U. S. Postal Service have layed another one. Some years ago, mail service in the U. S. was converted from an Executive Department (like, e.g., Treasury, Interior, Defense, etc.) to one of those

"quasi-governmental authorities." That was supposed to improve things. It did not. The old Post Office Department was at least responsible to the President and could be badgered by the Congress, even though its upper levels were traditionally staffed by political hacks and the Postmaster Generalship went to the President's campaign manager in the last election. The new Postal Service is staffed and run by God-knows-who and appears to be responsible to no one. The recent increase in U. S. postal rates demonstrates once again that its decisions are manifestly idiotic and its procedures are arbitrary, capricious and stupid.

The procedure is to "study" the need for an increase in rates for several months, then arbitrarily decide on what it will be, and then, then, put it into effect on ten days notice, leaving the public and all the local postmasters trying to figure out what to do. This kind of procedure might be tolerable notwithstanding its divorce from sense, if the new rates could be accommodated with stamps already in good supply. In the present case, however, that is not possible. Under the banner of saving people money, USPS has created a monster that will save the average person virtually nothing (perhaps \$2.00 per year), but will cause some (including yours truly) to either waste money or undergo substantial inconvenience, or both.

As we know, the new rate for U. S. domestic mail is 29¢ for the first ounce and 23¢ for each additional ounce up to 12 ounces. This should have been 30¢ and 25¢, and I have spoken with no one (including Postal Service employees) who does not agree. That could have been done with stamps already in existence in large quantities (5¢, 10¢, 20¢, 25¢, 45¢, etc.). Instead, we have the idiotic "F" and "this stamp when added...etc." stamps. That is dumb enough for the average letter, but let us consider mailing The Torque Tube. Each copy used to be 85¢ to a U. S. address. Now it is 98¢. How to do that? Well, one could use two 45s and an 8. However, all the postmasters stopped ordering 45¢ stamps several weeks ago for fear those stamps would become obsolete and they'd be stuck with them. The 8¢ stamp exists in theory, but no post office has any because no one ever bought any. How about 3¢, 4¢, 6¢, 2¢, 40¢, 50¢? Same problem. I need to mail almost 400 pieces in U. S. domestic mail each time, and there are simply not enough of these odd-ball denominations, except maybe at the Columbus Main Post Office, a visit to which is a lengthy trip through the looking-glass. What did I end up doing? If you look at the envelope this issue came in, you will likely find that I used one \$1.00 stamp, thus contributing 2¢ extra to the Idiots; I may have had to visit two or three post offices to get enough of those.

As of this writing, I have no idea what it will cost to mail to Canada and, as Air Mail Printed Matter (or "surface" mail as well), to overseas members, and my local post office doesn't either. Somehow or other, I'll work it out.

Mailers in larger quantities than our Club can get through this with postage meters, which can produce any denomination desired. These are a bother to administer, and cost a fair sum up front, but businesses can handle that. Bother or not, if it appears that the current fiasco is apt to be repeated in future, I may buy one of the damn things and pay for it myself.

Eventually, the Postal Service will produce 29¢, 23¢, 52¢ and 75¢ but that will take months. Now, tell me, wouldn't it have been a lot easier and more sensible to do it all in multiples of five and ten, or, if odd-ball denominations must be used, to provide enough lead-time to print the damn things in quantity before we need them? One does not, I submit, need to be a rocket scientist to answer "yes". Perhaps the trouble is that the Postal Service is in fact run by rocket scientists. If so, let them return to their rockets, ignite their boosters, and blast off to the orbit of Neptune.



# HISTORY

## BUICKS SOLD IN ENGLAND

This issue has turned out to be devoted in considerable part to European Buicks. I didn't really plan that, it just happened, but in any case it provides a good opportunity to discuss a very interesting piece of "literature" I acquired a few weeks ago. This is a large sales "fold-out" on 1938 models, which was printed in London for the use of Lendrum & Hartman Ltd., the "Sole Concessionaire" for sale of Buicks in the British Isles.

It would appear that the great majority of Buicks sold in Great Britain in the 1930s were McLaughlin models produced in Canada. Whether these cars were identified as "McLaughlin Buick" on the grille and rear deck emblems (as were cars sold in Canada) is not clear, and there is no mention of McLaughlin or Canada in the brochure. As was the case in Canada, the four series kept their U. S. names (Special, Century, etc.); in England, however, additional names were assigned to certain models. It does not appear that these additional names were affixed to the cars in any way.

The full line of U. S. models was not sold in Great Britain — at least not in 1938. (I am not certain whether McLaughlin had an equivalent for each U. S. model, either.) However, Lendrum & Hartman offered a model not sold in the U. S. and Canada. This was the "Albemarle Coupe", a five-passenger "drop-head" (i.e. convertible with all interior seating — no rumble seat) with "London Coach-built Body." The "Albemarle" had a flat windshield, a heavy cloth top with landau irons that folded "almost flat", and rear-hinged ("suicide") doors. At most, only four exterior colors were available (black, grey, blue and maroon) and some models offered a choice only of two; interior schemes were likewise very limited. Dual sidemounts were found on all English Buicks.

This is a list of the models offered in Great Britain in 1938.

- Regal Coupe — 40-series convertible (U. S. 46-C)
- Viceroy Saloon — 40-series trunk sedan (U. S. 41)
- Albemarle Coupe — 40-series "drop-head"
- Empress Coupe — 40-series "fixed head coupe" (U. S. 46-S)
- Century Coupe — 60-series convertible (U. S. 66-C)
- Century Saloon — 60-series trunk sedan (U. S. 61)
- Majestic All-Weather Saloon — 80-series convertible sedan (U. S. 80-C)
- Empire Saloon — 80-series trunk sedan (U. S. 81)
- Regent Saloon — 90-series six-passenger sedan (U. S. 91)
- Pullman Limousine — 90-series limousine with division panel (U. S. 90-L)
- Ambassador Saloon — 90-series seven/eight-passenger sedan (U. S. 90)

Missing from the line-up, at least in this brochure, were the business coupe, Century sport coupe, both Special and Century convertible sedans, all two-door sedans, all "streamline" models (44, 47, 67 and 87), and all formal sedans. It may also be noted that all models sold in England had "electric direction indicators," but it is not apparent from the brochure how these worked. All cars pictured in the brochure (the pictures are drawings, not photographs of actual cars) have '38 U. S.-style hubcaps rather than the "baby-moon" hubcaps typically seen on Canadian cars.

"Buick," says the brochure, "The Car the World Respects". (True then, true now.) The respect, however, did not come cheaply. The brochure has lost its original enclosed

price list, but does show the annual tax payable for each series. The tax was based on "R.A.C." horsepower which was, in effect, a measure of engine displacement, not brake horsepower as we typically understand it. The large (320 CID) engine carried a tax of 28 pounds 10 shillings. That was a considerable sum in those days; prior to the post-war devaluations of the pound, one was worth about \$5.00 U.S.

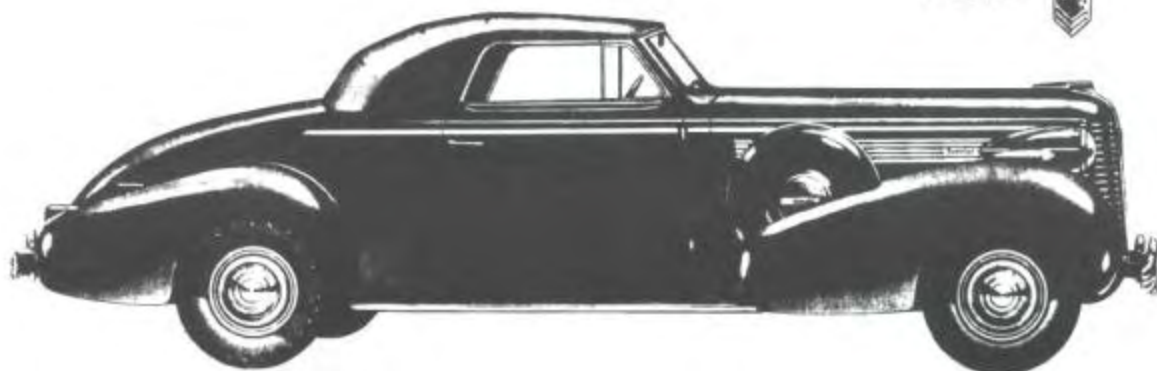


*Buick 8*  
MO Series 40  
SPECIAL



**THE ALBEMARLE COUPE** (on Model 40 Special Chassis, 122 in. Wheelbase, London Coach-built Body). Five-seater Drop-Head close-coupled Coupe. The folding head can be readily lowered and folds almost flat. Front seats are adjustable, bucket type, and rear seat holds three passengers in comfort. Extra wide doors make front and rear seats easily accessible.

Colour schemes available are Black, Blue, Grey or Maroon with leather upholstery and twill hood to tone. Equipment includes six steel disc-type wheels with metal covers for spares, safety glass, double windscreen wipers, dash clock, electric direction indicators, built-in luggage compartment at rear, bumpers, etc.



*Buick 8*  
MO Series 40  
SPECIAL



**THE REGAL COUPE** (on Model 40 Special Chassis, 122 in. Wheelbase, Fisher Body). 2/3 seater Drop-Head Coupe with Dickey Seat. Fisher No-draught ventilation. Available in Black, Blue or Maroon, upholstered in Tan leather. Finest quality twill hood.

Equipment includes six steel disc-type wheels with metal spare wheel covers, safety glass, double windscreen wipers, dash clock, electric direction indicators, bumpers, etc.



We all know that King Edward VIII of England had a black custom-built McLaughlin-Buick limousine. How did a two-tone beige McLaughlin-Buick Limited come to be seen in England, on the grounds of "Wollaton Hall", the ancestral country estate of Lord Willoughby? How did the car come to have this unusual color scheme? The remarkable story surrounding the car's original purchase, which was inspired by the vagaries of South American politics and the afflictions wrought by one of mankind's more unpleasant infirmities, is set forth here for the first time. Another Torque Tube exclusive!



## *Believe it...or Not:*

# *The Ambassador's Buick*

### A REMARKABLE STORY FROM THE ANNALS OF DIPLOMACY

His Excellency, the new Ambassador and Minister Plenipotentiary from the Republic of Paraguay to the Court of St. James, did not feel at all comfortable. His car was making its way through the streets of London toward Buckingham Palace, where he would present his credentials. Regrettably, His Excellency suffered from hemorrhoids, and the ride was not a smooth one. The best motor car the Paraguayan Embassy could muster, even for Occasions of State, was a venerable Wolseley Saloon. The ride was firm and the seat sparsely padded, and Ramón Bolívar García Hernández, the Ambassadorial chauffeur, was having trouble with four speeds forward and no synchromesh, not to mention driving on what to Ramón was the wrong side of the road.

His Excellency had been appalled, upon first arriving at the Embassy, to find no vehicles suiting his dignity. "My predecessor, that barbarous assassin Pardo, must have stolen the good cars when he left," thought the Ambassador. "Just like him."

"Thank God that is over," said His Excellency half-aloud as Ramón assisted him to his car after the ceremonies were concluded. He did not relish the trip back; nor, indeed, all future trips. "This car is an abomination," he thought, "surely the Paraguayan Ambassador deserves better." His wife had already filled his ears with complaints about the car in which she had been conveyed to Harrod's and other destinations appropriate for Wives of Ambassadors.

His Excellency's sour thoughts were interrupted by the sight of a long black auto pulling away from the Royal Garages. Not the usual Rolls, Daimler or Mercedes-Benz, this car had both a sleekness and a dignified appearance that caught the Ambassador's eye. "Ramón," said the Ambassador to his chauffeur, "what car is that?"

"I believe, Your Excellency, that is the King's Buick."

"What!" cried the Ambassador. "The King of England has an American car?"



"It is a Canadian Buick, Your Excellency," replied the chauffeur, "and it is reported that it is very powerful and the ride is very smooth."

Immediately upon his return to the Embassy, the Ambassador instructed his Confidential Secretary to determine where in London Buicks could be inspected, and the following morning found the Confidential Secretary on the telephone with Captain F. W. Hartman of Lendrum & Hartman, Ltd. in Albemarle Street. Captain Hartman would of course be pleased to demonstrate personally to His Excellency the unique virtues of the Canadian Buick, and would make an appointment to do so at His Excellency's convenience. That very afternoon Captain Hartman received the distinguished visitor with his usual suavity.

"It is Your Excellency's good fortune," said Captain Hartman, "that we have just this week received a shipment of the 1937 models, which are improved in some important respects over those of 1936, such as found favor with His Majesty the King. The 90-series models which in America are called 'Limiteds', are here known as 'Ambassadors' — aptly, if I may say so. Regrettably, the latest shipment of new models included only one Ambassador — a six-passenger saloon without division panel. However, we expect additional models to be arriving in future, and would also be honored to place special orders for motor cars of Your Excellency's choice. If Your Excellency's initial examination proves favorable, we would be pleased to place the 90-series saloon at your disposal over the coming weekend, so that you may more thoroughly evaluate — and, it is my hope, appreciate — its many virtues. My staff can instruct your chauffeur on its operation."

The Paraguayan Ambassador quickly concluded that he would like a test ride that very day. Captain Hartman had anticipated that possibility, and the "Ambassador" had been made ready. A few minutes later the Buick pulled away from the Albemarle Street showrooms, the Ambassador and Captain Hartman seated in back, with the Captain's best driver and Ramón in front. The Captain's sales pitch was muted — he had already concluded — quite correctly — that the Paraguayan Ambassador was a distinctly live prospect, and that the car would sell itself. The route had been carefully chosen in advance to emphasize both top-gear performance and smoothness of ride, and His Excellency's posterior was as salved by the comfort as his mind was charmed by the smooth patter of Captain Hartman.

The ride was over all too soon. During its continuance, however, one of Captain Hartman's chief assistants, Lieutenant Nigel Farnsworth, like the Captain a former Royal Naval Air Service Officer, had been busy. Through a few judiciously-placed inquiries, Lieutenant Farnsworth had learned that the Paraguayan Ambassador was extremely fond of Colombian coffee, Benedictine liqueur, and Hoyo de Monterrey cigars, all of which were waiting when His Excellency was ushered into Captain Hartman's office. This was too much. His backside soothed, his inside warmed, and his ego massaged, the Paraguayan Ambassador concluded that he must have the Buick forthwith. Even though it did not have the division panel and built-in refreshment cabinet that the limousine or formal sedan models offered, such amenities could, Captain Hartman assured him, be ordered from Canada and fitted at a later time. His Excellency scrawled his signature on an order, sat back, and enjoyed the delectable combination of French liqueur and vintage Cuban tobacco. Captain Hartman allowed just the hint of a self-satisfied smile to flicker across his face. His Excellency, concluding with regret that he must attend to Embassy business, took his leave, as Captain Hartman handed him an impressive bound catalog of the 1937 McLaughlin-Buick models and specifications.

No social events were planned for that evening, and the Paraguayan Ambassador looked forward to a quiet dinner in his quarters. Suddenly, however, the Ambassadorial



reveries were interrupted by alarming thoughts. If he was to receive a magnificent new motor car, what of his wife? Surely she would demand similar treatment. If so, from whence would come the necessary funds to purchase two Buicks? Indeed, thought His Excellency, he really did not know whether the Embassy had at his disposal enough money for the car he had already bought. Prior to dinner, the Ambassador laid his plan. He would pretend that he had really purchased the 90-series Buick for his wife, and would turn it over to her as soon as another suitable vehicle could be delivered for his own use. After all, she adored large cars, as she herself was ample of figure. If the money was not presently in the Embassy's accounts, he could obtain it by a judiciously-worded petition to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Paraguay. He would order for himself the model called in America the Roadmaster formal sedan; thus the wifely vehicle would be a bit longer and the total cost a bit less.

The Ambassador's plan opened in excellent fashion. A telephone call placed upon his return to the Embassy elicited from Lieutenant Farnsworth the information that an 80-series formal sedan with special interior had been ordered a month earlier by the Viscount Bramble. His Lordship had, however, suffered some financial embarrassment and was seeking a way out of his order. The car would be delivered within the near future. If His Excellency was interested in this vehicle also, a highly advantageous transaction might be arranged, as the Viscount was prepared to forfeit his deposit to avoid awkwardness. The Ambassador immediately dispatched Ramón back to Albemarle Street with a letter of intent, ordering him to obtain a case of Benedictine and a dozen boxes of Hoyo de Monterrey Coronas Grandes on his way back. Such extraordinary good fortune, thought His Excellency, should be celebrated.

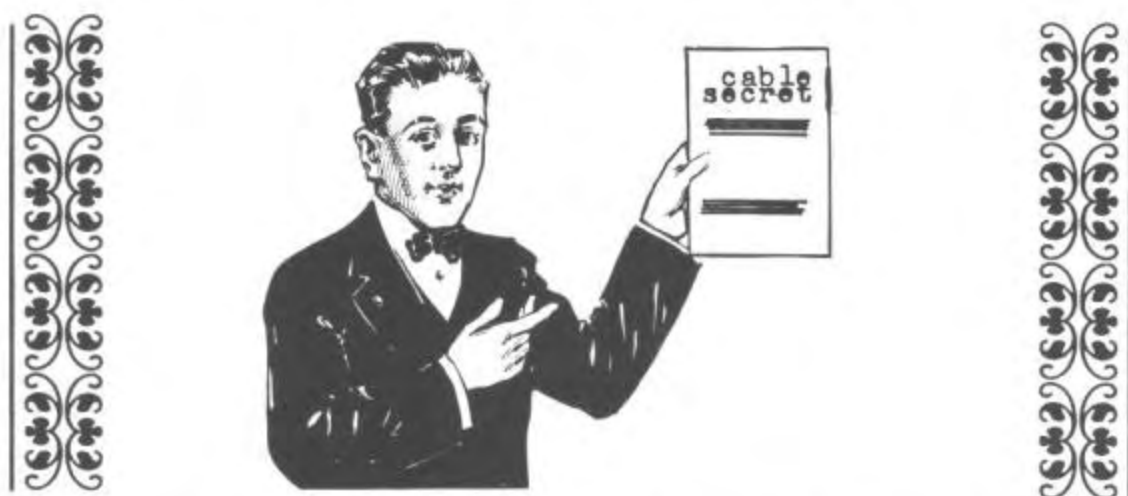
Dinner that evening opened with more complaint from Madame about the Embassy vehicles. The Ambassador assured her that he had taken steps to remedy the situation, and that even though the arch-fiend Pardo had sought to disgrace him, he would have the last laugh.

As the Ambassador had anticipated, Madame was extremely pleased upon learning that she would soon have a car of the same manufacture as that possessed by the King. Even though hers would not be quite so richly appointed as His Majesty's Buick, it would be a year newer. His Excellency retired to his study to savor his own brilliance.

There remained only the matter of payment. His Excellency, certain that his attention to economies would impress El Presidente', and that his desires would be favorably considered — after all, had he not been instrumental in El Presidente's rise to power? — instructed the Confidential Secretary to draft an appropriate cable to the Presidential Palace in Asunción, requesting the necessary funds. So confident was His

Excellency of the ultimate success of this petition that he dispatched to Lendrum & Hartman his personal cheque for the 90-series car.

A few days later that magnificent vehicle was delivered. His Excellency and Madame arrived that evening with style and smugness at a reception given by the Grand Duke of Luxembourg. Ramón strutted among the assembled chauffeurs with new-found status, the Ambassador's Wife received considerable attention from several handsome military attachés, and the Ambassadorial hemorrhoids were quiescent.



The following day, the Great Ambassadorial Plan began to unravel. His Excellency returned from a delicious lunch at the Peruvian Embassy to find his Confidential Secretary looking very troubled. "A cable has been received from Asunción, Your Excellency," said the Confidential Secretary, "and I believe you should read it immediately."

"What does it say?"

"It is concerning the automobiles, Your Excellency. If I understand this dispatch correctly, El Presidente has taken the position, that you stole two or three fortunes while in Paraguay, that he sent you here so you could steal no more, and that you should accordingly pay for the automobiles yourself, which, he says, you can easily afford to do, as you are wealthier than he. He further says that the meagre resources of the Republic are, under his enlightened administration, committed to social reform." There was a pause. "I am not joking, Your Excellency."

"Give me that paper!" Seizing it, the Ambassador fell heavily into a chair, whereupon sharp pain immediately beset his nether regions. He read the cable twice, shifting his backside uncomfortably as he did so.

"Perfidious lies! What an ingrate! What insult! Do you know what 'social reform' means, Jose? It means that the President, that Judas, that treacherous assassin, has doubled the number of his mistresses! No matter, I will have my revenge."

"Shall I attempt to cancel the automobiles, Your Excellency?"

"Never! The Ambassador of Paraguay, if not its President, is a man of honor. We will keep our commitment to Captain Hartman. Cable the Crédit Suisse in Geneva, using Code Z, and have a sufficiency of gold converted to English pounds in my personal account. We will pay, and the cars will be mine."



"Very good, Your Excellency."

"And Jose', say nothing of this to anyone. In particular, say nothing to Madame."

A few months later, the Ambassadorial fleet of new vehicles was complete. The Ambassador, although still smarting from his rebuff, was well satisfied. The Ambassador's wife, however, was not. She did not like a black car, she maintained, as it did not adequately set off the Russian sable coat she had acquired for the Fall Season. The coat would be more striking against a light-colored car. Madame would not be silenced, and was affronted by the Ambassador's suggestion that it might be better to buy another coat than another car.

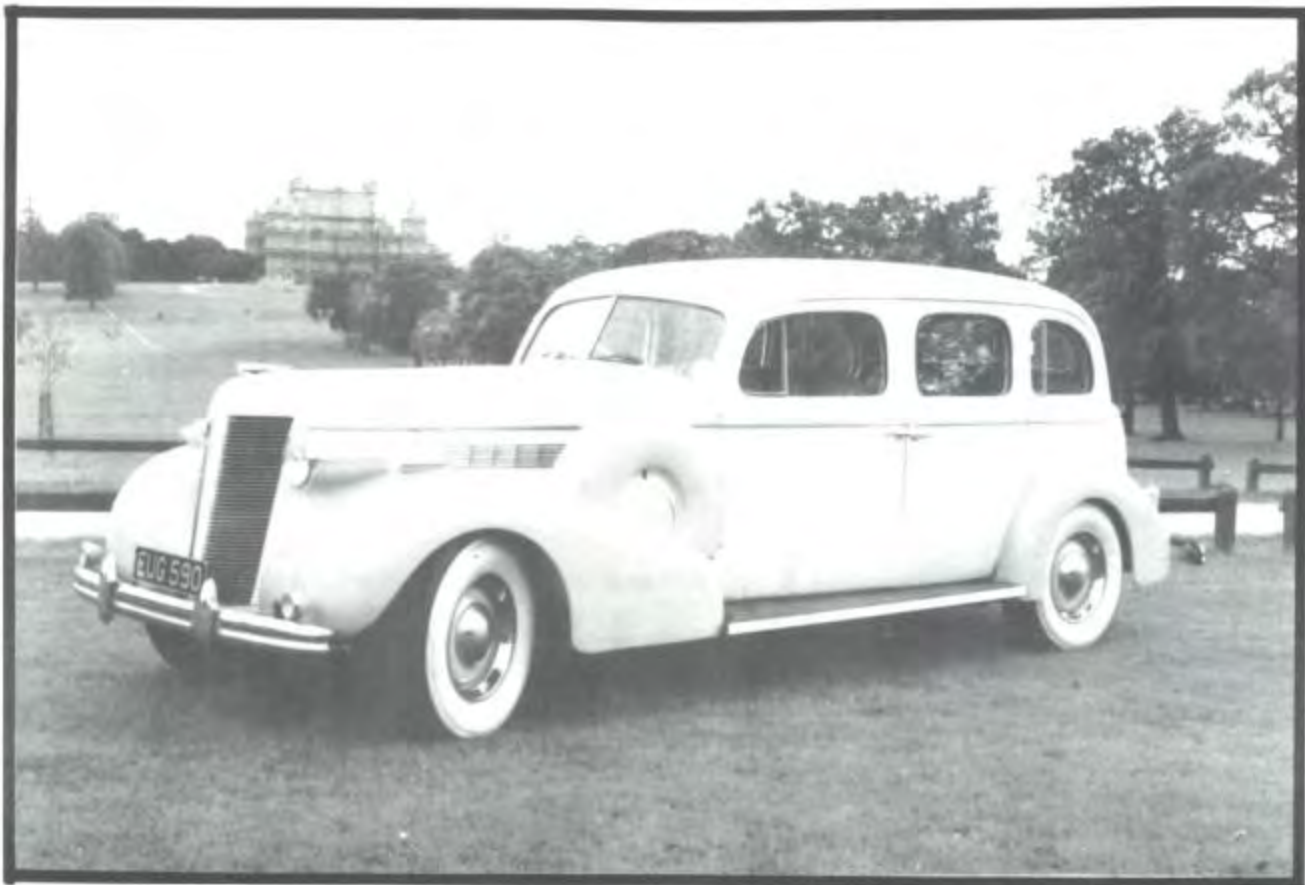
His Excellency could stand no more; such crises caused the Ambassadorial hemorrhoids to inflame alarmingly. He summoned the Confidential Secretary. "Jose'" said the Ambassador, "take Madame and her car to Lendrum & Hartman. Have them repaint it in any shade Madame desires. Express my regret that so magnificent a machine must be altered to satisfy caprice, and that I trust they will understand my uncomfortable..." — His Excellency shifted position with a grimace — "...very uncomfortable position. If necessary to cover the expense, use Code Z again. There are not enough ingrates in the world, I must have them in my own family. Merde! Cancel my luncheon with the Costa Rican Ambassador; I do not feel like eating."

A few weeks later, the Buick again emerged from Lendrum & Hartman's shops, now finished in two shades of beige. The London tabloids commented on the bold and striking fashion note struck by the Wife of the Paraguayan Ambassador. Naturally, Madame was extremely pleased. His Excellency's reaction was not recorded.



\* \* \* \* \*

Thus it was that a two-tone beige McLaughlin-Buick "Ambassador" came to be in the British Isles. The foregoing account has been put together from diaries and accounts recently discovered in the basement of the Paraguayan Embassy and among the papers of the Confidential Secretary, Jose' Bolivar Jiminez, who died several years ago. Later events are only sketchily known. It appears that El Presidente' was deposed in a coup d' etat shortly before the outbreak of World War II. The Ambassador, who was in Paraguay at the time, escaped into exile in Costa Rica. Madame and her car were stranded in England, but having discovered Code Z, she managed to live decently until she took up with a bogus Spanish count and disappeared from sight.



The Beige Buick turned up after the War in an auction, and was purchased by Lady Willoughby, who donated it to a girl's school, St. Swithin's-in-the-Copse, for use by her cousin, headmistress there for many years. More recently, the car was discovered in Nottingham, having apparently been stored there since the school was disbanded in the 1960s. One photograph of the car, taken in front of the ancestral home of Lord Willoughby in the 1940s, survives.

That, as a radio commentator says, is the story, and if you believe all or any part of it, you are ready to believe that the Dalai Lama is a Communist, that King Fahd drinks Manischewitz wine, and that all politicians are intelligent and honest.



*The only accurate parts of the accompanying fable are as follows:*

1. The Prince of Wales, later King Edward VIII, and not much later, after his famous abdication, the Duke of Windsor, did in fact acquire a customized 1936 90-series McLaughlin-Buick, along with a similar 80-series car for his "friend," the legendary Wallis Warfield Simpson.

2. The firm of Lendrum & Hartman, at 26b and 26c Albemarle Street in London, was Sole Concessionaire for the sale of Buick automobiles in the British Isles for many years. F. W. Hartman, in fact a former captain in the Royal Naval Air Service, was manager of the firm in the 1930s, and was



quite successful. Captain Hartman combined a good head for business, social standing, and an engaging manner, and the story portrays him as stuffier than he likely was in fact.

3. The photo does in fact show the car against a background of Wollaton Hall, built some time ago by the then-Lord Willoughby, whose estates stretched far in the vicinity of Nottingham, England.

The fable of course presents a caricature of a South American diplomat and the other fictional persons therein. It is not intended to imply that any persons, living or dead, behaved in the manner described, or to portray the present Republic of Paraguay -- about which I am almost totally ignorant -- in an unfavorable light.



## now for... The Real Story



### RESURRECTING A GRAND OLD LADY By Derek Hodgett (#690) - Nottingham, England

Remember me? I'm the guy with a statue in his front garden.

As you can see from the photographs, I have made considerable headway since some "work-in-progress" pictures of my efforts to resurrect a '37 McLaughlin Limited appeared in these pages a few years ago.\* I have apologized to our Editor for failing to send in more progress reports. We have had a difficult time at work over the past 12 months, involving the aftermath of a serious and tragic accident, and the resulting investigations and inquiries. This is never a pleasant business.

Even though I was often preoccupied with these difficulties, I found the Buick project to be a godsend during this period. It has given me a task that has helped me take my mind off this trouble and keep my feet on the ground during the inquiry.

First, of course, everyone will notice the car's rather unusual color scheme: the body is "Ermine White" -- which is creamy white -- and the mudguards (fenders, to you Yanks), spare wheel covers, and headlight fairings are "Cordoba Beige". Not everyone may approve of this, but I did not want to paint it black, or indeed any dark color. There was quite a bit of rot in the car when I purchased it, and I did not feel I had gotten the body panels quite good enough for that. (I had to cut 12 inches off the bottoms of the doors!) We all know how any faults will show up on black shiny surfaces.

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\*See Vol. VI, No. 7, p. 3 (May 1988) and Vol. VII, No. 3, p. 10 (Dec. 1988). The latter shows the statue in the Hodgett garden along with the "nude" body shell of the Hodgett Buick. I have preserved most of Derek's "British" nomenclature and spellings in this piece (e.g. "tyre" and "petrol") notwithstanding their indigestibility for U. S. "spell-check" typewriters...Editor.



Body work was not the only part of my project requiring a good deal of effort. The engine was very tired. I had to grind the crank to .030, and the cylinder bores to .040, and I line bored the block out to accept steel backed cam bearing shells, as well as reworking the connecting rods. Surprisingly, the cylinder head was in good shape, and must have had some work done on it in the past.

I was not happy with the mechanical petrol pump, but I could not get a six-volt electric pump here, so I decided to convert the whole system to 12 volts. Everything seems to have worked OK. I had the starter rewound to 12 volts because I didn't like the way it was slamming into the flywheel. I managed to get a 12-volt regulator and coil and changed all the bulbs. The only things not sorted out yet are the petrol gauge and of course the clock, but I will tackle these items this winter, along with adding a pair of vintage spot lights.

The steering and brakes have taken a lot of time to repair; all was very badly worn. I bored the stub axles out to take over-size bushings. The brakes were all seized and the drums badly scored, but I have skimmed them out and fitted new linings and wheel cylinders. I had to have new hand-brake cables made.

I realize the running boards are not quite correct, but the originals were so bad that I had to start from scratch. I'm hoping to find some of the correct ones. As I'm sure many of our readers know, 90-series body parts make for a tough search.



*Derek Hodgett and wife Kate pose with the Beige Buick in front of "Moss Spring House," their home in Nottingham, England.*

One very nagging problem was the windscreen wipers. There were no wipers on the car when I bought it. I tried everything imaginable to match up with the small splines on the wiper motor shafts, without success. I was looking out of my office window one morning when it suddenly occurred to me that the wiper arms off my company Volvo 760 headlight wash/wipe arrangement might work. The fit was not exactly right, but with a bit of cutting and welding I was able to modify a set of the Volvo parts to fit, and these improvised wipers got me through the vehicle inspection.

I have since located a set of arms from Bob's Automobilia in California. He has been very helpful during the rebuild, as indeed have Lynn Steele with rubber parts and J. B. Donaldson, who came up with a very nice steering wheel and horn ring. In my opinion, it pays to advertise in The Torque Tube.

The hub caps are the original McLaughlin-Buick products, which are different from U. S. Buick hub caps, as our Canadian members know. They look rather better in the photos than they are in fact; another job I will tackle this winter because I don't want to replace them with the U. S.-style repros. The car had wheel trim rings when I bought it, but these were simply beyond repair. I asked one of our company's tyre suppliers if he could find me some new ones, and he did. They're not exactly the same as the originals, and they came from somewhere outside the English-speaking world (i.e. the Far East), but are of good quality stainless steel and look nice.

There is also some work to do on the interior yet, but it has been completely retrimmed in beige leather. It had a leather interior originally — far more common in vintage English autos than in the U. S. Clean clothes and clean hands will be required for entry!

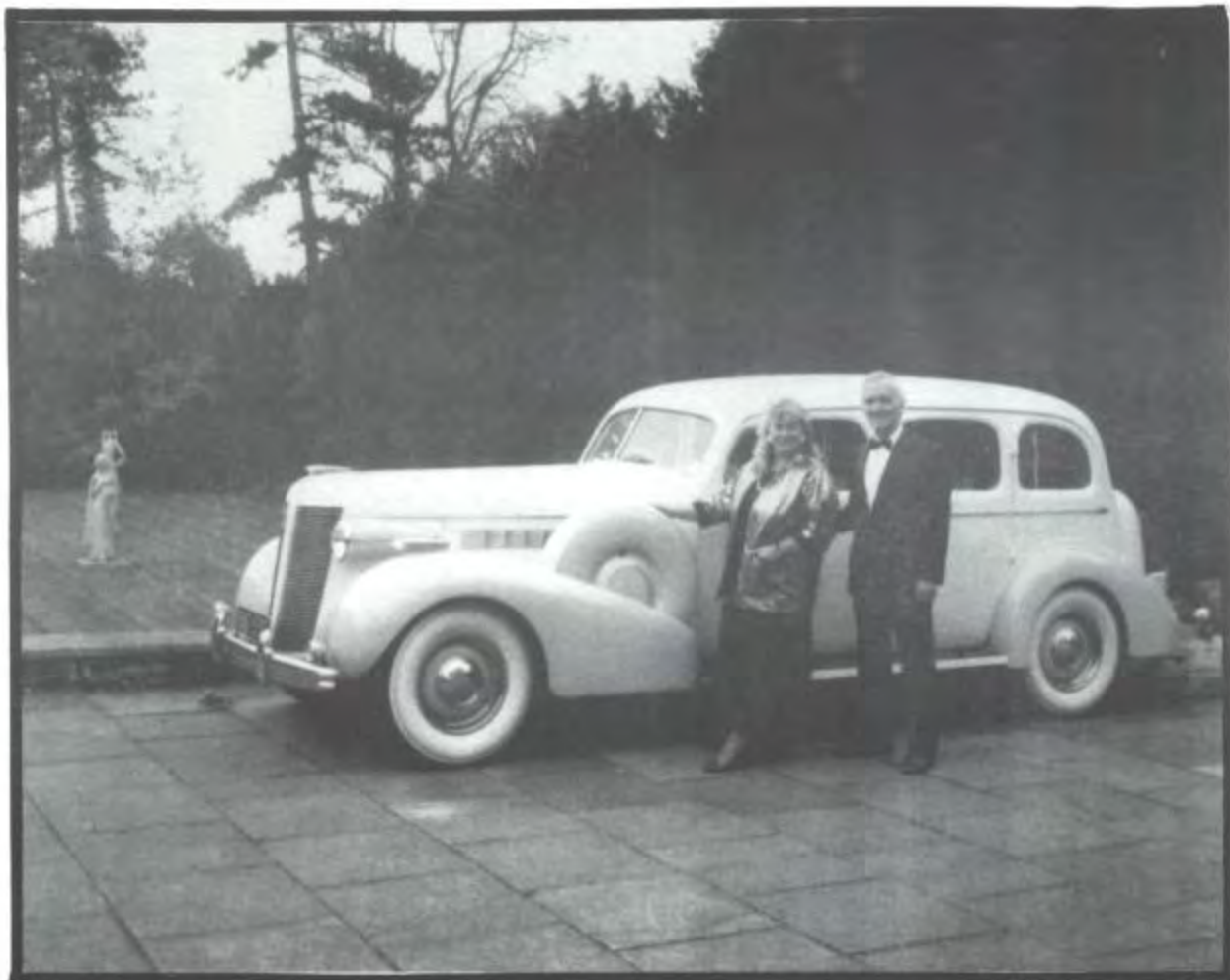
Our youngest son got married in October. I had promised him and his bride that they could use the Buick for the wedding, and I had to rush a bit to get ready, but that gave me an incentive to get the car on the road. I am pleased to say that the car passed its Ministry of Transport inspection at the first attempt. It was a good day for me; I felt so pleased to have that sticker on the windscreen and the car roadworthy in time for the wedding. Everything went well on the big day: the sun shone and the car looked great!

At one time I considered trying to change the gear ratio in the rear end, but our Editor, who's had his own rear end trouble, told me that '37 80- and 90-series rear ends are not susceptible to the same kind of modifications that some 40-series owners have done, and that I might be in for some big problems, or extensive modifications. Based upon this advice, I abandoned my notions of keeping up with those who like to travel at 70 or 80 m.p.h., and left things as they were. I'm glad I did. The car cruises happily at 55 and I do not think I would want to go much faster in the Old Lady. She draws a lot of attention and is a rare sight on the roads over here.

As noted above, the car is a McLaughlin-Buick, made in Canada. I have the original log book; you will be interested to find that it was registered as a "Buick Ambassador" in June of 1937. (Apparently the Buick models were given different names on this side of the Atlantic.) I have been trying to contact the original owners, or one of their descendants, hopefully to get hold of a photograph. I'd like to see what she looked like as a new car! So far no success.

I have saved my warmest praise for the last. The good lady in some of the photos is my wife Kate. She has been a tremendous help to me with the refurbishment of the car, and has done a good deal of the less gritty work, especially on the interior. She reads The Torque Tube, frequently before I get the chance, and won't give it up until she is finished!

With a '37 Buick Limited and a good lady like Kate, what on earth more could a man want? Probably nothing...but I must admit to being captivated by the pictures of those convertibles I've seen in The Torque Tube. I would dearly love to buy one; they look magnificent. Perhaps that will be my next project!



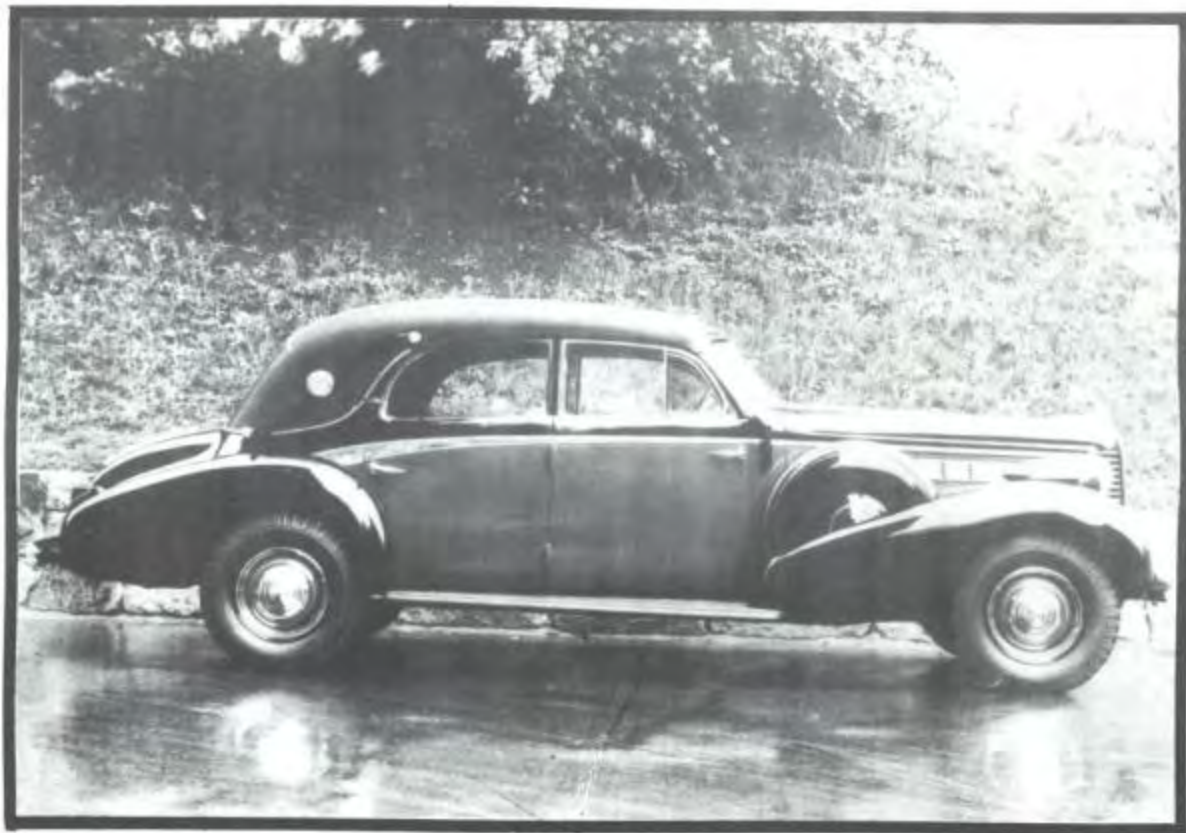
Derek and Kate ready for a Big Day. You see, the Paraguayan Ambassador's Wife was right: a beige car does set off dark clothing nicely, doesn't it? The now-famous statue appears in the background.



Please remember that there are nine issues of The Torque Tube each year. That is because: (1) I cannot possibly produce any more; and (2) when I proposed changing to a larger bi-monthly Torque Tube (i.e., six per year) everyone screamed objection. (It seems people like to find it in their mail boxes as often as possible.) That being so, there was no issue labelled "February". Do not complain that you did not receive February, because your complaint will go straight into File 13.



# ● Nordberg's Roadmaster ●



## **RESTORING A SWEDISH-BODIED BUICK** **By Mats Ahrin (#786) - Nykoping, Sweden**

My interest in Buicks began in the early 1970s through the purchase of a 1936 Roadmaster model 81. It needed a complete restoration, which took me 6000 hours during six years. The car was ready in 1981. Going into this hobby means that you get to know a lot of other "car nuts". One of them had been able to find a 1938 Roadmaster convertible sedan (model 80C) with a custom body made by the Swedish bodymaker Gustaf Nordberg. Nordberg started to make bodies in 1904, often to the Royal House. The chassis came from Cadillac, Rolls-Royce, Packard, Isotta-Franchini, Minerva, etc. In the mid 1930s the dealer that sold LaSalle, Cadillac, Buick and Chevrolet in Sweden decided to order twelve custom-bodied Buicks each year, beginning with 1934. One of the surviving '38s was bought by my friend in 1972. I fell in love with the car the first time I saw it and wished that I might be able to find another. But since only twelve were made the chances seemed almost nil.

In 1977, almost by chance, another friend of mine came across a car that was covered by a poor leaking tarpaulin. He said, "The car is a Buick with soft top and suicide front doors". I couldn't believe him. I went into a cold sweat, because if it was as he had said, the car had to be a Buick made by Nordberg. So it turned out to be, and we

*Above is a photo of a Nordberg-bodied '38 80-C as built. The top is similar to those used on some German convertibles of the period.*



The Norberg-bodied '38 Roadmaster "as found" in 1977 exhibits the toll taken by many years of outside storage. Although the colors in the photo have faded some during the intervening 14 years, it appears that the car was originally finished in two shades of green, with the center panels being considerably lighter than the upper panels and fenders. The top has bleached to a dingy gray. Unlike "export" models shipped to British Empire destinations, the car has left-hand drive.

were able to locate the owner. We managed to persuade him to sell the car to us. We gave him the money at once so he couldn't change his mind. We later found out that several others had tried to buy the car from him but in the end always had failed.

The car was originally sold to the managing director of a moving company. It was delivered in February 1939. The company kept the car until 1965, after which it passed through several owners before we bought it. The car was used in several movies; I don't know how many, but the earliest film I have seen it in was made in mid-1939. It has been driven 45,000 miles, but despite the fairly low mileage it needed a total restoration. I couldn't persuade myself to start that restoration until 1987. I began with the frame and front suspension. I lowered the frame but before that I placed five jackstands around the body. That way I could paint between the frame and the body, which is so weak that you really have to be careful. The body consists of a wooden framework from the dash backwards. All screws that keep this frame together are covered by sheet metal, so restoring the wood partially has been quite difficult. The floor, trunk and doors are ready. The convertible top frame and the wood frame where the sheet metal and the hooding are nailed in the lower rear end have been the most difficult ones so far. But one thing that you learn in this hobby is patience. It always is worthwhile. With some luck I might get it painted this spring.

The interior needs to be totally renewed. One problem is that this car has a cloth interior rather than leather. In order to get a similar fabric we must weave it. My



wife, who is fond of weaving, has said she can do it. We think that we can manage to attach the cloth to the seats and door panels ourselves, but not fix the top. It consists of inner ceiling, insulation and outer covering. That is a little too much to manage without skilled craftsmanship.

The car was almost complete when I bought it. What it didn't have was a clock, a lighter, radio and Guide Lamps which it had when new. I found the clock here, but the lamps I have been unable to find. The lighter and the radio I bought from Robert Jones of Burton, Michigan. He has been of great help, as have a lot of other people in the BCA. As all 1938 cars in Sweden number only 10-15 or so, I have had to turn to the USA in order to obtain anything. I made a cross-country trip in 1978 and visited



*The status of things in November 1990. Still a long way to go, but diligence will ultimately pay off with a beautiful and exciting car.*

a lot of car yards as well as the 75-year Buick Celebration. That was a trip I'll remember, especially all the nice people I met, particularly in Flint. But this is what the hobby is all about. A way to get to know each other and share a genuine interest in Buick. To me the 1938 models are the nicest Buick had in the 1930s. Hopefully I'll send in a story on the car when it is ready to go down the road.



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Our thanks to Mats Ahrin for sharing his experiences, and for showing us what to me is an extremely interesting and attractive custom-bodied car. It is indeed gratifying that at least two of these Nordberg '38s have survived. While, as we have observed before, beauty may be in the eye of the beholder, many of the custom bodies put on 1930s American cars strike me as less attractive than the "factory" styling. Not so with the work of Gustaf Nordberg. All the parts look like they belong together, and the design avoids both outlandish Gallic flamboyance and the heavy-handedness typical of some German body work.



Many such handcrafted bodies were made of wood and light-weight sheet metal (sometimes aluminum) and were never intended to be removed from the chassis-and-cowl units to which they were attached. (Thus Mats' observation that the body is "weak".) This presents a formidable challenge to the restorer, but it appears that Mats is equal to the task. Anyone who can spend 6000 hours on a car seems to me capable of damn near anything. Deserving also of special praise is Mats' wife. Anyone who can weave automotive upholstery fabric herself gets my vote for Woman of the Year.



## TECHNICAL TIPS

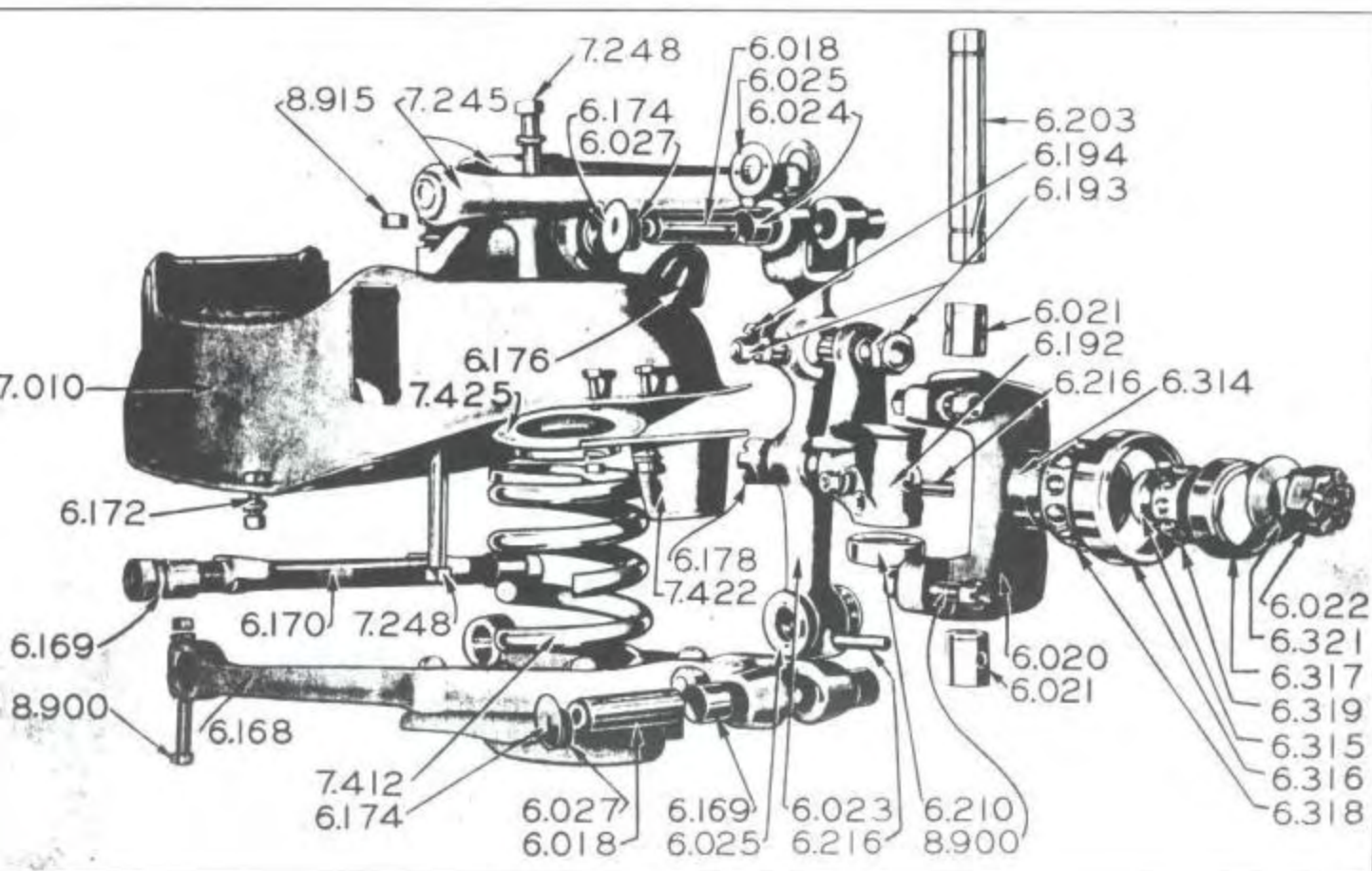


### CARBURETORS

In Vol. VIII, Nos. 3 and 4 I set forth lists of recommended (or perhaps "suggested" would be better) suppliers of various parts and services. Among those listed was The Carburetor Shop of Eldon, MO. (I believe this business is run by a man named Hargrove.) The Carburetor Shop was included in this list based upon favorable comment by Skinned Knuckles contributing editor Matt Joseph, whose writings I admire and whose judgment I respect, although I had no personal experience with the firm. Member John Huffman (#623) was looking for a Stromberg AAV-1 to replace the 1940s Carter WCD on his '38 Special, and I suggested that John call The Carburetor Shop. He did. Yes, they have one. (In fact, they have four of them.) Now take a deep breath. Price each? \$1200! Yes, you read it right: One Thousand Two Hundred Dollars. Well, folks, if you absolutely must have an authentic carburetor and price is no object, go to it. If you ask me, however, this guy ought to re-name his business The Carburetor Bandit and relocate it to the Bangkok Bazaar. Granted, these carbs are now scarce, and I might pay as much as \$300 for a NOS or very good one with choke and starter switch, but \$1200 seems plainly excessive. The hobby does not need any more price-gouging, and my recommendation of The Carburetor Shop is hereby withdrawn.

### 80-90 SERIES FRONT ENDS

The diagram below, taken from the 1928-1938 Master Chassis Parts Book, shows the '37 80 and 90 series front suspension. Many of these parts are quite difficult to come by. In looking over a Buick catalog from Kanter Auto Products (76 Monroe St., Boonton, NJ 07005; 201/334-9575), I was reminded that Kanter offers lower outer and upper outer pin kits for '34-'40 80 and 90 series. This is the only source I know, and these parts must have been specially made, because they apparently never existed in NOS "factory" form. They are thus pricey: \$75 each or \$300 per car. (6.018 and associated parts in the diagram.) Kanter is not my favorite old-car parts merchant, but here one has no choice. So far as I know, the lower inner shaft (6.170) for 80 and 90 series cars exists nowhere, so if yours is creamed, see your friendly machine shop.



1936-37 Front Suspension

### 1937 80 & 90 SERIES FRONT SUSPENSION

6.018	steering knuckle support pin	6.193,	caster angle
6.020	steering knuckle bushing	6.194	adjuster bolts & nuts
6.021	steering knuckle bushing	6.203	king pin
6.024,	bushing & washer	6.210	steering knuckle bearing
6.025		6.216	lock pin
6.027	packing	(6.315-	wheel bearings
6.168	lower control arm	6.321	assembly
6.169	bushing	7.245	shock absorber
6.170	lower control arm shaft	7.422	rubber bumper
6.174	expansion plug	7.425	spring shim
6.176	rubber bumper	8.900	bolts
6.192	caster angle adjuster	8.915	nuts

NOTE: not every part shown in drawing is listed here.

# Getting Out of **TROUBLE**

## **MORE MAIN BEARING TROUBLE**

**By Don Micheletti (#250)**

I enjoyed the articles in Issue 3, particularly David Paulisin's report of his oil pump and main bearing trouble (see Vol. IX, No. 3, page 26). It reminded me of some similar troubles of my own that I'd like to comment on.

My '38 Roadmaster has 110,000 miles on it and had always suffered from very low oil pressure. We decided to attend the West Coast Meet at Santa Maria (a round trip of about 600 miles). About a week and a half before, I thought I should give those old bearings a peek - just so I wouldn't leave my crankshaft on Highway 101.

This engine was supposed to have been overhauled in 1980 (heard that one before?) and ran very well with no noise. (As a matter of fact, it ran lots quieter than many rebuilt engines).

I pulled the pan. The pump looked good: none of the bad signs expressed in other articles. So, on to the bearings.

It was obvious that the pistons and rods had been out. Removing a shim or two set the rod clearance right (I used plastigage). However, the rods were not loose enough to cause the excessively low pressure. This meant the mains needed a look. What was also obvious was that the main bearing caps had never been out before, nor the bearings adjusted.

Actually, you can get a good clearance reading for the mains using plastigage; however, it's not easy. If you jack against the crank on either side of the main you wish to check, you push the crank against the upper bearing and will get a good plastigage reading. However, it takes two jacks and you have to protect the crank with wood; also it's very crowded - don't destroy the motor mounts either. If you are not careful using the shimming method described in Dave Paulisin's story, however, you can damage the babbitt.

OK, back to the story. Everything looked good and it only took .002" shim removal to get the proper clearance - that is until #4 main bearing. It had lots of scratches in it; however, the crank was fine. I wanted to go to Santa Maria, but was not confident with the bad main.

I shopped around for a new set of mains. I found two sources: one in San Francisco and Terrell Machine in Texas. The place in San Francisco has been in business for about a million years, however, the owner is not always a joy to deal with; he is happy to have you beg for the parts and thank him for the privilege of giving him your money. There was only a few dollars difference so I went with Terrell Machine. The bearings were apparently new old stock and looked great. I took a chance and bought standard size.

I used the old trick of putting a special pin in the crank oil hole, turning the crank and rotating the upper bearing out of the block. Reversing the process replaces them. Needless to say, you have to do a lot of cleaning to be sure there is no dirt anywhere.

Putting back all the original shims gave me about .004" clearance. That's a bit loose, but since this way of doing things is a bit shaky anyway, I figured I was better off with more than less clearance at first. I could always go back and remove shims if the pressure was not good.



When I got the engine going, the oil pressure was terrific, running hot (180) about 35 psi at an idle, 45 psi on the road. I finished the job on Monday night and we were to leave for Santa Maria on Friday morning, so I didn't have too much break-in time.

I was VERY apprehensive going on a long trip after such a quick and dirty bearing job. We caravanned with 3 other cars and they were trucking along at between 60 and 65 mph. I don't think I saw anything but the oil pressure gauge for the first 200 miles!

As it turned out, the pressure dropped about 10 psi after the first 50 miles and stayed there for the rest of the trip down and back. I felt this was OK.

The car ran very well. I was worried about the killer grades, but the big Roadmaster didn't even notice them. Other than a leaky valve cover gasket (which was fixed in the parking lot at Bob's Automobilia) there was no problem.

I do plan to get back into the engine and bring the clearance back to .002" - but I'm not in too much of a hurry. I still wear a tattoo on my nose (a large target) from a reluctant-to-remove greasy main cap deciding to finally fall off.

Also NO overheating - but that fix is another story.

EDITOR'S NOTE: When I first read Don's story I wondered how an engine could have had new rod bearings put in it, yet have the main bearing caps untouched. I never thought of taking the pistons and rods out without the crank, but that seems to be the explanation. Here is Don's answer to my question about that.

"It was pretty common, with the engine in the car, to just pull the head, pistons and rods, do a ring and valve job and not touch the crank at all. I believe this was done with my engine. The reasons I felt the main bearings on my engine had not been touched were several. The main caps still had all their shims. All the rods and their caps had been numbered with a punch, but the mains were not. Finally, the grease and grime around the mains appeared untouched; not so with the rods and pistons."

That the crank was still good after 110,000 miles is a tribute to Buick quality — and in all likelihood to diligent maintenance by the car's owners. If the No. 4 main had not been scored, Don probably could have put things right with nothing more than shim removal. One reason bearings are made of softer material than cranks is so they can absorb abrasive particles or suffer the damage. It's a lot easier to replace main bearings than to pull that monster crank out — which requires either pulling the engine or something else just as difficult.

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## **REMOVING AND OVERHAULING A '38 ENGINE: HOW I DID IT, PART I**

**By Jim Rufener (#767)**

This is a start on a series of "how I did it" articles and information on the removal, overhaul and reinstallation of my engine. I'm not a professional and may not get everything in exactly the right order, but I hope my experiences will help some other members and will show that with a little bit of help an "amateur" can do it.

I obtained my 1938 model 41 in May of 1989. It had belonged to a member of

our Gopher State BCA Chapter and was in our spring car show in May of 1988. It was a car I desired very much, but at that time it was not for sale. However, after a year of occasional talk, the former owner got my 1965 Skylark GS and a sum of money.

That may seem like a heavy price to pay, but I was pleased with my "deal". The '38 was all original and showed only 28,700 miles on the odometer. There was no rust in the body — something you don't find too often here in Minnesota — and no dents. All the lights worked, including a set of fog lights, as well as all the gauges and the speedometer. The radio seemed a little tired, but it did get one station. As usual, however, the clock did not work and probably never did. I also received the original owner's manual. All the plastic was good, as was the woodgraining on the dash and door trim.

The engine was not an easy starter, but from what I understand, that's not unusual. However, after warming up, the oil pressure would start to drop after a few miles, and pressure at idle was only 3-4 pounds. I always check the mileage on all my Buicks ('67 Wildcat and '70 and '73 Rivieras at present) and keep track of oil changes. I found that the '38 was using a quart of oil every 175 miles. Although the body and interior were excellent, the engine compartment was very dirty, and it looked to me like a lot of oil was blowing through the breather pipe and vents on the engine.

It didn't take too much thinking for me to decide to pull the engine and have a look inside. I thought I might have frozen rings and excess clearance on the mains and rods. Something was definitely wrong, although the engine ran well and idle was fabulous with no noise or vibration.

Unlike those fortunate people who have big shops attached to their homes, I live in a small town house. (I live in Eagan, Minnesota, and work the evening shift at the Veteran's Hospital in Minneapolis.) I've leased 40 acres of property about 100 miles north of Eagan, and had a 36' x 48' "pole barn" put up there. I had the barn divided on the inside so I have a 12' x 48' living area and 24' x 48' for vehicles. This gives me some room to work, and I can stay there overnight. However, I needed some more equipment to do the job. Fortunately, I was able to borrow an engine hoist from a neighbor (Steve Kerr). Another neighbor (Charles Scott) helped me get the engine out. I bought an air compressor (3 HP, 12 gal. capacity) from Sears, and a spray gun. (My advice on paint spray guns is this: do it right the first time and get a good one. The inexpensive gun I bought was worthless, and I ended up borrowing a gun from another neighbor who is a professional painter. It sure helps to have good neighbors!) I also bought a small sandblaster which came in handy quite a few times.

I figured that when I pulled the engine I had better take care of some other problems at the same time. The wiring in the car was like new under the dashboard, but forward of the firewall it was rather sad looking. I ordered a new wiring harness from Harnesses Unlimited. (I asked for wiring for the fog lights and received it that way; they also included a set-up for turn signals, which I may install some day.)

I planned to remove everything from the firewall forward and clean and paint the parts that needed reconditioning, as well as overhaul the engine. The first thing I did was to start soaking the water temperature sending unit with penetrating oil so I could get it out of the head without breaking it. I was able to get up north most weekends to do the work, and every weekend I'd give the temperature sender a few more squirts.

I checked with National Bushing in Mora, Minnesota to see if they would do the work on the engine. They had overhauled the engine from a '41 Limited I had, before I drove it to Florida in 1984, and the work had come out well. Yes, they said, "bring 'er on in."

I knew that there would be a period of time between removing and reinstalling everything, and that I was sure to have a problem trying to remember where all the parts were supposed to go. So, I bought several boxes of sandwich bags. Every small part went into a bag with a note identifying it. I used a wire brush wheel to clean things up where necessary before bagging the parts, and dipped each one in WD 40. The bags went into cardboard boxes, grouped according to the function and location of the parts.

For the firewall, nose pieces, and the belting over the cowl, I took cardboard and made an outline of the areas from which I would remove bolts. I then punched holes in the cardboard and put the corresponding bolts, nuts, etc. in the holes. I also made drawings of some areas I knew might be difficult to reconstruct in memory when the time came to reassemble.

Well, that's it for now. My next letter will deal with removing the engine — and what the shop found wrong. An accompanying list sets forth the names of some of the suppliers of parts and services that I used.

Suppliers used in Jim Rufener's engine rebuild and other work.

Terrill Machine, Inc.  
Rt. 2, Box 61  
De Leon, TX 76444  
817/893-2610

National Bushings & Parts  
824 Forest Ave.  
Mora, MN 55051  
612/679-2342

Bob's Automobilia  
(Torque Tube advertiser)

Metro Old Car World  
11610 Jay St.  
Coon Rapids, MN 55433  
612/757-4106

Lost Art Ltd.  
10525 Florida Ave. S.  
Bloomington, MN 55438  
612/941-6676  
(wheel striping)

Harnesses Unlimited  
(Torque Tube advertiser)

EDITOR'S NOTE: A few months ago, Jim Rufener sent me some "work-in-progress" photos of an engine rebuild project (too fuzzy to reproduce here), told me he had been assisted and inspired by some other members' offerings in The Torque Tube, and asked if I'd like an account of his experience, which he hoped might likewise assist and inspire others. Jim said his story might have to come in installments, having discovered, as I did many years ago, that it takes a good deal longer to write stuff down than it does to read it. I said, in effect, "fire away", and we have here the first installment. I have included it in this issue without waiting for the rest, not only because I was staring at another blank wall so far as technically-oriented matter was concerned, but also because I figured once Jim got started down the road to glory as a published author he could not turn back. I will thank him now for his efforts thus far, and in particular for turning in the material within weeks of having promised to begin, a performance sharply to be contrasted to that of some other promisors, who will not now be identified.



One thing that stands out in Jim's account of his preliminary work is the conscious effort to plan ahead, and to recognize the manifold deficiencies of human memory when it comes to putting back together what one has put asunder. The organization and categorization of small parts, and the making of a careful record of how things go together, whether through photographs, sketches, templates, or whatever, are essential to a successful and smooth-running restoration. Don't think you can remember everything and that it will all be obvious. You can't and it won't. Moreover, what starts out as a simple project involving a relatively few pieces frequently grows into a more complex one involving many pieces, and it almost always takes longer than one thinks it will. (Suppressing and finally conquering the inevitable optimism about time-to-completion is perhaps the most difficult of human endeavors.) Those of us who are not by nature methodical and well-organized persons (and I include myself among that number), or who lack the flair for quickly visualizing the inter-relationship of diverse objects that some are blessed with, must make a special effort.

Being confronted with blockage or mis-assembly, or stopped dead by an array of pieces that one knows damned well were once an integrated whole, but which now appears to contain one sample from each of the mechanical devices invented during recorded history, is humiliating. Not long ago, I was humiliated by the re-assembly of an old wheelbarrow which I'd blithely taken apart two months earlier to clean and paint, figuring I'd have the job done in a week. If a mere wheelbarrow can do this, what about half a car?

In any project, "make haste slowly" is a suitable watchword, and the value of planning, organization, documentation, and the careful organization of pieces cannot, in my view, be over-emphasized.

I would add a final word here about WD-40. It's unquestionably terrific stuff and has many uses. (Try it as a "starting fluid" on a balky two-stroke lawn mower engine, for example.) However, as we know, it contains silicone, and thus should not be used as a preservative on anything that will later be painted. It is almost impossible to clean off without special solvents, and even a trace of silicone will cause paint to crater, or "fish-eye", or worse yet, to fall off later. To that extent, I would not follow Jim's procedure of dipping things in WD-40.



## NEW MEMBERS

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Ted Masilian #883<br/>1818 Four Mile Rd.<br/>Racine, WI 53402<br/>414/639-8066<br/>'38 41</p>       | <p>Ed &amp; Rob Dobie #885<br/>1101 Student Ave.<br/>Springfield, OH 45503<br/>513/399-6244<br/>'37 41</p> | <p>Richard Gagliardi #888<br/>1526 Pelican Ln.<br/>Vero Beach, FL 32963<br/>407/231-5205<br/>'37 47</p> |
| <p>W. Paul Tegtmeier #884<br/>21 Kitzbuhel Rd.<br/>Parkton, MD 21120<br/>301/343-1765<br/>'38 46-S</p> | <p>Michael Mansfield #886<br/>B-32 Coventry Place<br/>Magnolia, NJ 08049<br/>609/782-1981<br/>'38 46-S</p> | <p>Bill Sudderth #889<br/>4204 Misty Meadow Dr.<br/>Ft. Worth, TX 76133<br/>817/346-6220<br/>'38 46</p> |
|  | <p>David Wettersten #887<br/>1724 Asbury St.<br/>Falcon Heights, MN 55113<br/>612/644-1019<br/>'38 4-</p>  |   |



# PARTS EXCHANGE



## PARTS FOR SALE

1938 40-series. 1938 Facts Book (very good)--\$65; 1937 steering wheel core--\$30; engine splash pan right--\$24; headlight rims (3 good)--\$16 ea front shocks (no leaks), pair--\$25 ea; pressure plate--\$25; air cleaner complete--\$55; coupe inside door garnish moldings (good)--\$22 ea; coupe door stainless moldings(good)--\$18 ea; coupe rear quarter windows (goo)--\$18 ea; coupe rear quarter window glass with rubber--\$28 ea; 4-door front & rear reveal moldings--\$22 ea; 4-door glass LF & RR door--\$10 ea; right hood side (no emblem)--\$18; gas & oil line combo under hood--\$15; map light switch--\$4; wiper motor complete L & R controls & bezel--\$45; choke pull--\$10; NOS windshield washer kit complete hardware, hoses, etc --\$75; bottle & top only--\$15; battery box (good)--\$35; hand brake handle --\$12; transmission cross member blasted & painted--\$10; oil pans (2 good) --\$20; valve cover--\$18; original license plate frame--\$14; hub cap (1 good)--\$12; trunk lite accessory--\$18; pair bumper brackets--\$15; 2 front fender braces--\$8 ea. JERRY LANDRY (#263). 34 Goodhue Ave., Chicopee, MA 01020. 413/592-2746.

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Parting out 1938 Special 4-door trunk-back sedan. Call or write your needs, I may have it. Call Ted, 414/639-8066 eve's or write to Ted Masilian (#883), 1818 Four Mile Rd., Racine, WI 53402.

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### 1938 BUICK LITERATURE FOR SALE:

Radio accessory price sheet (1 page)--\$5; billboard advertisement (1 page)--\$5; leather & accessory price sheet (2 pages)--\$7; GM bulletin on selling cars (3 pages)--\$10; sorry letter from Buick to a non-Buick buyer--\$10; accessory price sheet (3 pages)--\$10; Feb. 14, 1938 Time magazine with Buick ad--\$20; self-shifter transmission manual--\$35; gate-fold color brochure showing all models--\$40; parts department manual--\$50; monthly service bulletins--\$60; 32-page color brochure showing all models--\$65; 1938 Buick distribution book--\$100; Buick engineering in formation book (very rare)--\$150. Call DAVID BYLSMA in Maryland at 301/551-7236 EST, 5 PM-9PM Mon.-Fri. or any time Sat. or Sun. or write to 7747 Siden Drive, Hanover, MD 21076.

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## PARTS WANTED

Good used or NOS gas pedal with hinge that mounts to floor, or just hinge, for '37 Special. DENNIS KLUBERTANZ (#757). W 3676 E.Winesville Rd., Porterfield, WI 54159. 715/732-4647.

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For '37 Special sport coupe: locking door handle; steering wheel; armrests; good grille or broken grille to repair mine; sunvisors; left headlight lens (can trade a right lens); trunk lid; bumper guards; window crank moldings. STEVEN RINKE (#854). 31830 Scott Ct., Warren, MI 48093. 313/979-0734.

Sway bar for 1937 model 90--must be from series 80 or 90 only. BRUCE BARRETT (#836). 1945 McDonald, Missoula, MT 59801. 406/542-2563 evenings.

Marvel BD-1 carburetor. ANDREW DIEM (#852). 5230 Loughboro Rd., Washington, DC 20016. 202/364-8115.

For 1938 Special coupe: grille; headlight lenses; door window trim; bumper guards & badge; instrument panel; steering wheel ring; exhaust manifold; carburetor; clock; defroster. THEODORE TAYLOR (#792). 3313 S. 298th St., Auburn, WA 98001. 206/946-5080.



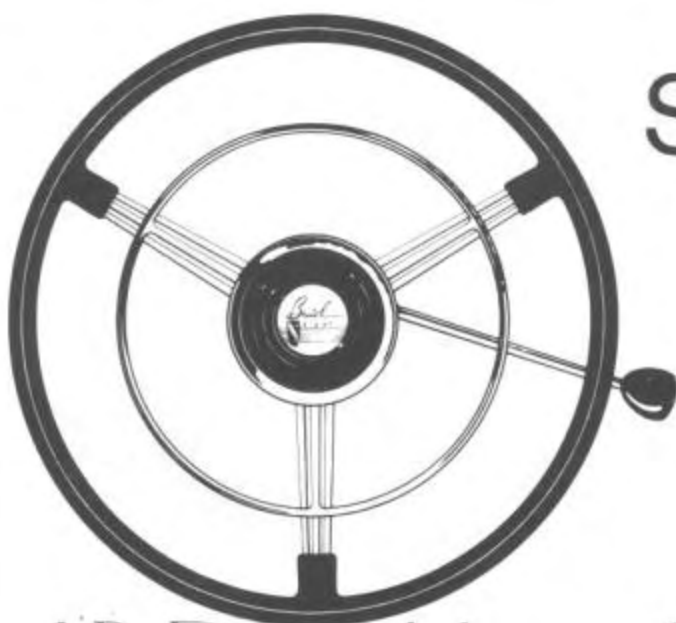
## CARS FOR SALE



1937 model 41. Runs well, body good. 39,000 miles. \$3000 or will trade for heavy-duty pickup. EARL REDNOUR 4640 E. Terrace, Indianapolis, IN 46203. 317/353-8418.

1938 model 41 4-door sedan. Body-off restoration started, chassis near completion. Also two other '38 model 41 sedans, one possible restoration, one for parts. With car trailer. Take all for \$6000, or will sell separately. KEVIN ANDERSON (#798). 3061 Stoney Point Rd., East Berlin, PA 17316. 717/259-7823 or leave message.

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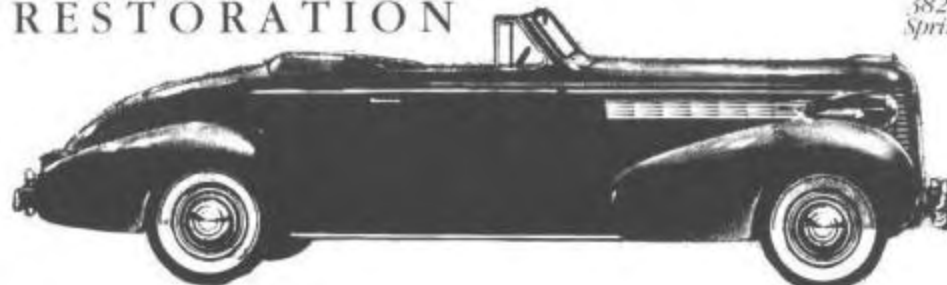
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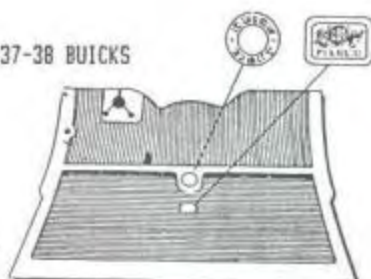


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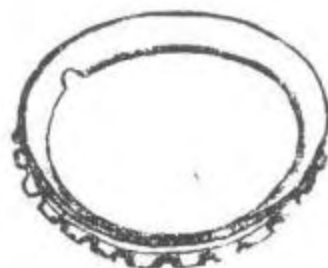
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### Registration Form

Reservations (to include registration, banquet and motel) must be received no later than May 15, 1991

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_ '37 - '38 # \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name (if attending) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Registration (individual or family) \$25.00

### Banquet Reservations (includes tax and tip):

# _____	Prime Rib	@ \$23.00 each	.....\$ _____
# _____	Broiled Salmon	@ \$23.00 each	.....\$ _____
# _____	Chicken	@ \$23.00 each	.....\$ _____
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(A photocopy of this page is an acceptable registration form)



